12. (Amended) A vector comprising a nucleic acid sequence which hybridizes under stringent conditions to a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of [*AFC1*, *RCE1*,] a nucleic acid encoding SEQ ID NO:3, a nucleic acid encoding a conservative substitution of SEQ ID NO:3 , a nucleic acid encoding SEQ ID NO:4, and a nucleic acid encoding a conservative substitution of SEQ ID NO:4,[and conservatively modified variations thereof].

13. (Amended) The vector of claim 12, wherein the nucleic acid sequence is [selected from] a member of the group consisting of [the sequences of] SEQ ID NO:1 and SEQ ID NO:2.

Please cancel claim 14.

14. (Canceled) An isolated polypeptide encoded by the vector of claim 12.

15. (Amended) The polypeptide of claim 14, wherein the polypeptide is encoded by a nucleic acid comprising a member of [selected from] the group consisting of [the sequences of] SEQ ID NO:1 and SEQ ID NO:2.

17. (Reiterated) A recombinant cell transduced with the vector of claim 12.

18. (Reiterated) The recombinant cell of claim 17, wherein the cell is a yeast cell.

19. (Amended) The recombinant cell of claim 17, wherein the vector [encodes] comprises a nucleic acid selected from the group consisting of [the sequences of] SEQ ID NO:1 and SEQ ID NO:2.

Please insert the following new claims:

22. (New) The recombinant cell of claim 17, wherein the cell is a prokaryotic cell.

23. (New) The recombinant cell of claim 17, wherein the cell is a eukaryotic cell.

24. (New) The recombinant cell of claim 23, wherein the cell is a mammalian cell.

25. (New) An isolated cell, wherein said cell is selected from the group consisting of *Δafc1* cell, a *Δrce1* cell, and a both *Δafc1* and *Δrce1* cell.

26. (New) The cell of claim 22, wherein said cell is selected from the group consisting of a W303 MATα *Δafc1, Δrce1* cell, a W303 MATα Δrce1 cell, and a W303 MATα *Δafc1* cell.

27. (New) The cell of claim 23, wherein said cell is a selected from the group consisting of W303 MATα *Δafc1*::HIS3, *leu*2, *his*3, *trp*1, *ura*3 cell, a W303 MATα *Δrce1*::TRP1, *leu*2, *his*3, *trp*1, *ura*3 cell, and a W303 MATα *Δafc1*::HIS3, *Δrce1*::TRP1, *leu*2, *his*3, *trp*1, *ura*3 cell.

28. (New) The recombinant cell of claim 17, wherein said cell is selected from the group consisting of a *Δafc1* cell, a *Δrce1* cell, and a both *Δafc1* and *Δrce1* cell.

29. (New) An isolated polypeptide comprising a member of the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:3 and conservative substitutions thereof, and SEQ ID NO:4 and conservative substitutions thereof.